

# Robin's Nest Intergenerational Daycare, LLC

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10/6/2009

Small group housing for the elderly:

Saving tax dollars and enhancing quality of life

**Main concept:** Small community based communal living arrangements for up to six elderly persons with medical-model adult daycare center affiliation.

**What state lawmakers need to do:** Two key steps are required by state lawmakers to make this possible:

(1) The state must enact legislation similar to the laws which already enable group homes for DDS clients. This step alone would allow private-market initiatives to evolve without any expense to taxpayers while providing an affordable alternative for the elderly. This would also benefit taxpayers by delaying, reducing or even avoiding the need for public assistance because it would allow private funds to last longer.

(2) State lawmakers need to allow the same funds which currently pay for inappropriate nursing home placements to be used for small-group housing (supported by medical-model adult daycare) for the elderly. Since this living arrangement costs half as much as a nursing home, more elderly would benefit for less tax dollars.

**Advantage (s) to the elderly:** Living in a small group retains a home-like "family-style" living environment AND it keeps housing and companion costs far lower than living alone or in an institution such as traditional nursing home. Because this would allow the elderly to live in average houses (with minor alterations for handicapped) with an overnight companion, they can live in a neighborhood setting and remain part of the community. During the day all of their medical, social, recreational, dietary and transportation needs can be provided by medical-model adult day care.

**Advantage (s) to taxpayers:** By making this housing/living environment possible, elderly with limited private funds would have a housing option which allows them to "stretch" their own resources for a much longer period of time, delaying or possibly avoiding the need for public assistance all together. Those requiring tax dollars to support them would only cost taxpayers

**half** what a nursing home placement costs. Communal living could cost as little as \$110 per day; Medical-model adult daycare currently costs 63.55 a day. The combined cost for this is \$173.55 per day. Nursing homes cost about \$330 per day.

**Why is this proposed living arrangement better than others that already receive public funds?**

**Nursing homes** provide 24-hour nursing. This makes them expensive and should be used as a last resort. Most elderly need some nursing support, some support in activities of daily living, and a means of remaining part of the community – but they don't need 24 skilled nursing. In fact, many of those who end up needing nursing homes would have been able to avoid their placement if they had adequate support with medication and other issues early in the process.

**Rest Homes** (residential care facilities) provide no nursing support and often house other populations (i.e. psychologically impaired populations) which are dangerous or incompatible to life with elderly.

**Assisted living** requires visiting nurse personnel from the outside to perform routine care including filling pills boxes and taking blood pressure readings. Each visit is far more expensive to the taxpayer than an entire day costs at an adult day care center. Since the personnel assignments can vary the care becomes fragmented as well as expensive. Fragmented care is likely to lead to a decline in health and independence – and expensive nursing home placement.

**What oversight would protect the elderly in this environment?**

Medical-model adult daycare centers must be certified by the Connecticut Association of Adult Day Care Centers prior to receiving funding for state-supported clients. This means they must meet local fire codes and health district requirements as well as detailed nursing, social services and recreation documentation requirements.



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**ROBIN TWIGG**, second from left, owner of Robin's Nest, an adult day-care center in Clinton, visits with, from left, Betty Ann Pascucelli, Karen Weglarz and 99-year-old Anna Moriarty, three women who take advantage of the services supplied by Robin's Nest but do not live there. Visit [courant.com/elderly](http://courant.com/elderly) to view more photos of Robin's Nest.

# IMPERFECT OPTION

## Public Funding Limited For Full-Time Residents At Adult Day-Care Facilities

By **REGINE LABOSSIERE**  
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**C**LINTON—An 86-year-old World War II veteran sat in a wheelchair in his bedroom Monday playing his clarinet.

Richard Houpert, who has lived most of his life in Clinton, has performed around the world and now practices the clarinet in his newly adopted home: Robin's Nest, an adult day-care

center in an old Victorian house on High Street. The facility is a medical-model center, which means it provides the same medical care as a nursing home, but patients only receive public funding for the daytime.

And that's becoming a problem for the four ailing patients on fixed incomes who have to pay out of pocket to live full time at Robin's Nest. Though social service and other agencies spend about \$300 a day to keep someone in a nursing home, they won't pay to keep someone

full time in an adult day-care center — even though it costs about \$67 a day per person — unless the person has been diagnosed with certain mental disabilities, said Robin's Nest owner Robin Twigg. Another advantage to providing financial support for adult day-care facilities and boarding houses, Twigg said, is that patients get more individualized attention.

"Why should he have to give up living here

# Care

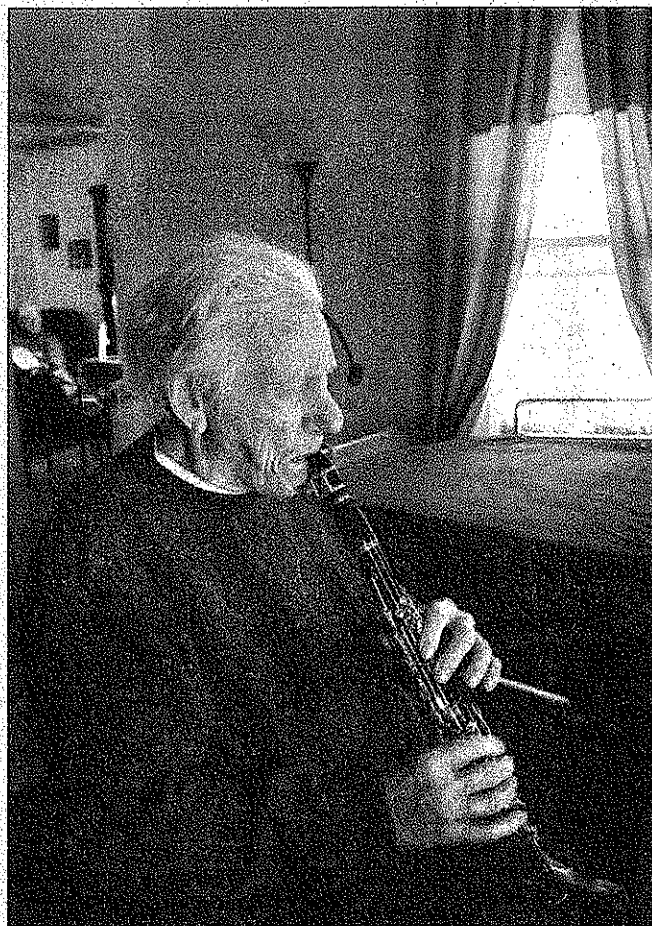
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[for less] and lose the one [caregiver]-to-four ratio?" Twigg said. "Even if you have thousands and thousands saved up, that goes. [Adult day care is] the best bang for the buck you'll ever get in health care."

That's the message Twigg is trying to convey to U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney, D-2nd District, and other lawmakers. Twigg is hoping lawmakers will help secure funding for Robin's Nest to take care of the boarders, especially since it would cost less than sending them to nursing homes.

Courtney visited Robin's Nest Monday afternoon to see Twigg's operation and to hear how he can help. Courtney discussed the health care "quagmire" that the federal government is in and how the funding of services, including medical-model adult day-care centers, must be a topic of conversation at President Barack Obama's health care summit next week.

"It's something that we need to work with state officials to get in line with the state's demographics. This



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**RICHARD HOUPERT**, 86, of Clinton, had a stroke two years ago and now lives at Robin's Nest in his hometown.

population is going to grow," Courtney said after speaking with Twigg and a few patients.

"This is right in line with smart health care reform. ... What she's doing is saving the

taxpayers a fortune."

In addition to Houpert and the others who live there full time, Robin's Nest provides rehabilitation, medical services and social activities for 10 additional people, many of whom have dementia or physical disabilities. Patients' family members said they hope Twigg and lawmakers can work together to find a positive solution to the funding issue.

"This is a pretty wonderful place for him to be in," said Tom Houpert, Richard's son. "What she's trying to do by providing a kind of private care for residents, create a home atmosphere, it's irreplaceable. The caregivers really know them and care for them."

Jackie Duda, the daughter of a patient who visits Robin's Nest every day, also applauded Twigg's work. In addition to the "comfy, cozy atmosphere," as Duda called it, she said having a place like Robin's Nest allows for family members to get a break from caregiving on short notice whenever they need it.

"My mom doesn't need 24-hour nursing care, but she does need supervision," Duda said. "It's a necessary service. If nothing else, it makes dollars and sense to do it."



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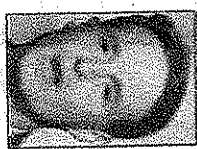
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STEPHEN DUNN/istock.com

## Funding Is An Issue At Adult Day Care

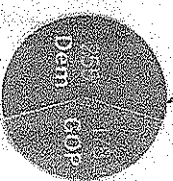
Fred Murphy, left, spends one day a week at Robin's Nest, an adult day care center in Clinton. U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney, D-2nd District, visited the center Monday and said that medical adult day care centers must be a topic at President Barack Obama's health-care summit next week. **CTNow, Page B1**



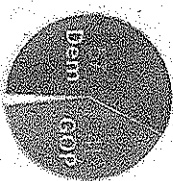
## Democrat Bayh Leaving Senate

Sen. Evan Bayh, a centrist Democrat from Indiana, announced Monday that he won't seek a third term in Congress, one more name in a growing list of departures from Washington. **World & Nation, Page A6**

**House**  
435 seats



**Senate**  
100 seats



**Leaving office** As of Feb. 15, 2010

Dem	13	Dem	5
GOP	19	GOP	7

NOTE: Independents caucus with Democrats.  
Source: House and Senate Press Galleries, MCT

## LIVE SMART

### Free Electronic Tax Preparation

The dreaded day approaches, but free electronic programs, including one from our pals at the IRS, ease the pain of paying taxes by letting you prepare and file your forms for free. **Living, Page D1**

### Things That Must Be Said

Why is it so hard to say "I deserve a raise" or "Your boyfriend is cheating on you"? Find out more in this morning's Live Smart segment during the "FoxCT Morning News" at 5:15 and 5:45.

## Highway Tolls Proposed

Highway tolls once again will be an issue at the Capitol, as a legislator tries to raise money for highway and bridge maintenance. **CTNow, Page B**

## Medical Disclosure

All medical mishaps reported by state hospitals would again be made public under legislation to be considered this session by the Public Health Committee. **CTNow, Page B1**

## Snowboarder Wins Gold

American Seth Wescott won a gold medal in men's snowboard cross. Megan Sweeney of Suffield is in 27th place after the first two huge runs; two more are scheduled today. **Sports, Pages C3, C4**

## Expect A Snowy Day

Two to 5 inches of snow. High of 34. **Pages B2, B3, and Fox 61**

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